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MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

WCC kicks off centennial celebration

By Jeanna Graves
Correspondent

Alumni, current students, and friends of William Carey College (WCC) arrived on the Hattiesburg campus recently with a definite purpose, to "Celebrate Our Past; Embrace Our Future." This Homecoming theme represents the 100th anniversary of the founding of the college.

According to newly-crowned Homecoming Queen Vickie Hall, "This Homecoming just seemed more joyful somehow. Everyone was smiling and happy. It was a great way to celebrate a century."

Hall, a theatre major from Raleigh, was one of two Homecoming Queens crowned during half time of the basketball game. Jessica Merchant, a psychology major from Crystal Springs, was crowned along with Hall.

"It was such an honor to be chosen as one of the two queens in the first-ever tie for this position," said Hall. "I couldn't have been more honored to share the title than with Jessica."

Homecoming festivities began Friday with a luncheon honoring alumni missionaries. WCC graduates John and Kathy Lee McNair received the Vision Award for selfless missionary service. The McNairs served over three decades in India, Spain, and Uruguay.

The President's Reception honored former Jenkins-Chastain recipients, two of the college's 23 Rotary Scholars, and alumni awards recipients. Trolley tours were a big hit with alumni and current students who took a custom-designed tour of downtown Hattiesburg guided by WCC faculty and staff including Milton Wheeler, history professor since 1961.

Decade reunions were held in the Lorena Roseberry Smith Education Building followed by "Roasts and Toasts, the Baptist Way," a program which included a catfish supper and look back at faculty and staff, current and retired, in a humorous slideshow by Allison Chestnut.



CATCHING UP — Current and former William Carey College (WCC) students visiting together during the intermission of the recent WCC 100th Anniversary Homecoming Concert were (from left) Owen Sullivan, Joel King, Audrea McMillan Stewart, Vickie Hall (Homecoming Queen), Kami Stansbury, Andrew Breland, Amanda Kirby, Steven Caldwell, and Mandy Jackson. (BR special photo by Jeanna Graves)

Many events involved current students as well as alumni. "Homecoming was a great success. The Student Government Association (SGA) hired a professional fireworks company to light up the sky Friday," said Audrey Morgan, student activities director. "The Baptist Student Union and the SGA worked together to present a Student Tailgate Party and for the first time campus leaders escorted the Homecoming Court.

Donna and Milton Wheeler were surprised when WCC President Larry Kennedy recognized them with plaques for their four

decades of outstanding service and recent generous financial gift to the college.

Josephine D'Arpa, WCC associate professor of music, received an Outstanding Service Award. A 1960 graduate, D'Arpa has established a 40-year legacy of faithful service to her alma mater and a reputation for dedication to her craft.

Geinene Haynes Carson was the recipient of the Distinguished Young Alumnus of the Year award. Naul Bodden, owner of NCB Consulting Ltd, a local financial consulting company in Grand Cayman, received the Distinguished Alumnus Award.

Approximately 400 audience members enjoyed the Sounds of a Century concert which capped off Carey's Homecoming events. Don Frazure, professional tenor and Carey's artist in residence, and ten alumni, faculty, and student vocalists and instrumentalists presented popular music from the last 100 years.

Founded in 1906 as South Mississippi College, the institution later became Mississippi Women's College and in 1954 was renamed William Carey College. The school is affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention and supported in part by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program.

William Carey College continues special Centennial Celebration events throughout 2006, including the October release of a pictorial history of the college spanning the past 100 years. For more information about Centennial events, please contact the WCC Alumni Office at (601) 318-6167 or (800) 962-5991, ext. 167.

Graves is a WCC public relations assistant.

WCC retires school debt, ahead of schedule

HATTIESBURG, Ms. (Special) — William Carey College (WCC) is officially debt free. The Hattiesburg-based school, affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention, presented BancorpSouth with the final debt payment on January 4 — ten months ahead of schedule.

"This is an exciting time for the college," said WCC President Larry Kennedy. "This accomplishment could not have happened without the loyal support of alumni and friends."

Kennedy said one of his primary goals upon assuming the presidency in 1998 was to eliminate the college's debt of \$7.5 million. "We have been good stewards of the gifts entrusted to us," said Kennedy.

During the same period of time in which the college eliminated the debt, almost \$17 million have been invested in capital improvements. This includes \$12.3 million in new buildings and renovated facilities, \$1.7 million in technology, one million dollars in library holdings and two million dollars in new equipment — all achieved without borrowing any money.

WCC will be celebrating its 100th anniversary through-

out 2006. During the centennial celebration, the college will dedicate a number of facilities. In April, the College will name the baseball field after longtime faculty member and school booster Milton Wheeler. The renovated alumni house will be renamed the Donna Wheeler Alumni House in honor of Milton Wheeler's wife, who serves as WCC alumni director and is also a longtime school booster. The Wheelers have made the college the recipient of their estate, currently valued at \$2.3 million.

Additional dedications include Donnell Hall, named for college benefactors Robert and Linda Donnell, which will house the Center for the Study of the Life and Work of William Carey, the Christian missionary for whom the school is named. Chain Garden, undergoing renovations from damage caused by Hurricane Katrina in August of last year, will be rededicated in honor of Bobby and Betty Chain of Hattiesburg.

In addition, the new softball field should be completed sometime in May. Plans are underway for new facilities (theatre and cafeteria) on the Hattiesburg campus and for the construction of a new campus on the Gulf Coast to replace the facility heavily damaged by Hurricane Katrina.



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Time is now for vigilance

With the world in its usual state of perpetual chaos, we really didn't need any more reminders of the literal existence of evil. That's what we got, though, with the burning of ten churches (at publication deadline) in our neighboring state of Alabama — a lot closer to home than the Middle East or Pacific Rim.

What better target could there be for these evildoers than small, isolated, rural Baptist churches? The Southern countryside is adorned with such churches, everywhere one looks. Sometimes it's hours — if not days — before a car passes by. The buildings are occupied infrequently but on a predictable schedule.

Security systems are non-existent. A poorly-lit fire can smolder for days; a well-lit fire can bring down one of these old, wood frame churches in just a few minutes.

What kind of person (or persons) would do such a hideous thing as burning down a Christian house of worship? What kind of warped thinking leads to such vile acts? Church-burnings seem to fall into three main categories. Depending on the research and the researcher, there may be more categories but the top three seem to be racial motivations; hatred of Christianity and/or practice of Satanism; and juvenile pranks or vandalism that gets out of control.

Race doesn't appear to be a factor in these latest fires. Regardless of the rationale, churches have been destroyed.

Guide One, a major church property insurer that counts the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board among its customers,



ALL THAT'S LEFT — Flags rest high and untouched over the remains of Ashby Church's building in Brierfield, Alabama. The building was destroyed by fire — apparently by arson — early on the morning of February 3. (BP photo by Lauren Chow/The Alabama Baptist)

offers the following recommendations for safeguarding churches vulnerable to arson like the ten churches in Alabama. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, and some information from other credible sources has been added:

- Illuminate exterior buildings, doors, and parking lots from sunset to sunrise.
- Position motion-activated lights near doors and windows, and consider installing a central office-monitored security/fire system. Install a security camera system to record key areas.
- Always keep doors and windows locked when building is unoccupied.
- Trim shrubs and trees away from buildings.
- Implement a formal tracking system for keys to the church, and limit distribution of keys as much as possible.
- Use solid-core doors, high-quality deadbolt locks, and tamper-proof hinges.

"Watch" modeled after the Neighborhood Watch concept, and ask church members to drive around the property as often as possible. (Again, no one should attempt to apprehend any suspects.)

A profile of the arsonist or arsonists is beginning to form. Descriptions are being distributed of certain vehicles and vehicle occupants seen around some of the churches just before fires were discovered. In all likelihood, the individual(s) involved will be captured.

However, the churches will still be gone. Pray for the congregations victimized by these unspeakable acts, and safeguard your own church against a similar fate. The perpetrator(s) — and even the Evil One himself — will eventually get the message.

Editor's note: For additional church safety information, contact GuideOne at (877) 448-4331, ext. 5118. Web site: www.guideonecenter.com.

GUEST OPINION:



I'll be skipping Brokeback Mountain

By Tim Wilkins, Exec. Director
Cross Ministry, Wake Forest, N.C.

"Aha — so you are still tempted with same-sex attractions!" I do not deny it! Martin Luther said it this way, "If your head is made of butter, stay away from the fire."

These opponents will also argue that ex-gay ministries "only teach avoidance techniques." Indeed, avoiding anything which may cause temptation is appropriate and biblical:

• "Do not set foot on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evil men. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn from it and go on your way" (Proverbs 4:14-15).

• "You are to abstain ... from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things" (Acts 15:29).

• "Avoid every kind of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

• "Flee from sexual immorality" (1 Corinthians 6:18).

• "It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality" (1 Thessalonians 4:3).

A self-avowed unhappy homosexual man e-mailed me to say he saw the movie and "cried for three days after seeing it." Why am I not surprised? Another wrote: "As a man who has struggled with homosexuality all my life, I decided I would face it head on when I first saw the previews." (Those previews did their work, didn't they?) Indeed, another wrote: "I would rather face challenges than run from them." These reasons may sound heroic, and one can imagine a man charging into the theater refusing to avoid this issue which has caused him so much hurt.

Let me ask: is it possible the homosexuals' continued pain

results in part from continued time investment in things homosexual? When Potiphar's wife was attempting to seduce the godly Joseph, he faced his challenge by running for the exit sign (Genesis 39:12).

Lest I sound uncaring to homosexuals, let me say (and evangelicals need to hear this also) that I am aware of the unfathomable suffering which is part of same-sex. One of the reasons that evangelicals have not made much progress in reaching homosexuals with the Gospel is their failure to empathize with the excruciating pain homosexuals experience.

To view the movie most likely will reduce one's defenses from future immorality. I will not spend two hours and 14 minutes of my life seeing Brokeback Mountain. Rather, I will devote an additional two hours and 14 minutes to my time with God who, when I am tempted, will also provide a way out so that I can stand up under it. (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Wilkins, a former homosexual, is executive director of Cross Ministry (www.crossministry.org), a Christian outreach to homosexuals. He is now married and has three children.

Prof: Ayatollah planned world domination

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP) — As William Wagner sifted through the pages of deceased Iranian strongman Ayatollah Khomeini's book on Islamic government, an outline became apparent that was far more than the basics of how government works in the Muslim world. It was a guide for militant Muslims to take worldwide control.

"Khomeini wrote that it was his desire to see all of the surrounding countries of Iran become Islamic republics," said Wagner, author of the book, *How Islam Plans to Change the World*, and professor of missions at Golden Gate Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif.

"This would include countries such as Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan," Wagner said. "Thus one of the desires of Iran — which is the main supporter of Hamas [the upset victor in the recent Palestinian elections] — is to basically take over the governments of those countries."

Wagner said Khomeini's book outlines a five-step plan for the takeover of the world, beginning with the overthrow of the Shah in Iran. The second step is to take control of the countries surrounding Iran and turn them into Islamic republics, followed by a push to drive Israel out of existence. The fourth step is to take control of Western Europe. The final step in

the plan involves America, which Wagner said Khomeini believed would collapse on its own from moral degradation.

"[Muslim radicals are] working now on a combination of the second and third stages, which is to take over particularly Iraq and the other countries, which would also include Palestine, and set up Islamic republics, all with the intention of driving Israel into the sea," Wagner said. "It is all a part of a grand strategy."

While Islamic Sharia law is not in place in various countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa, Wagner said radical groups are at work to eventually implement it. Radical groups in Turkey, for instance, are seeking Sharia law even as the government remains on a secular path, he said.

"The more countries that become Islamic republics, the more that strengthens the radical element in more moderate countries, thus leading to the possibility of a stronger Islam in the Middle East," Wagner said.

One of the specific instructions laid out in Khomeini's book, Wagner noted, was for radical groups to go along with the government when it appears that the government is opposed to what they are doing. They should do this, he said, until the groups can take over the governments.

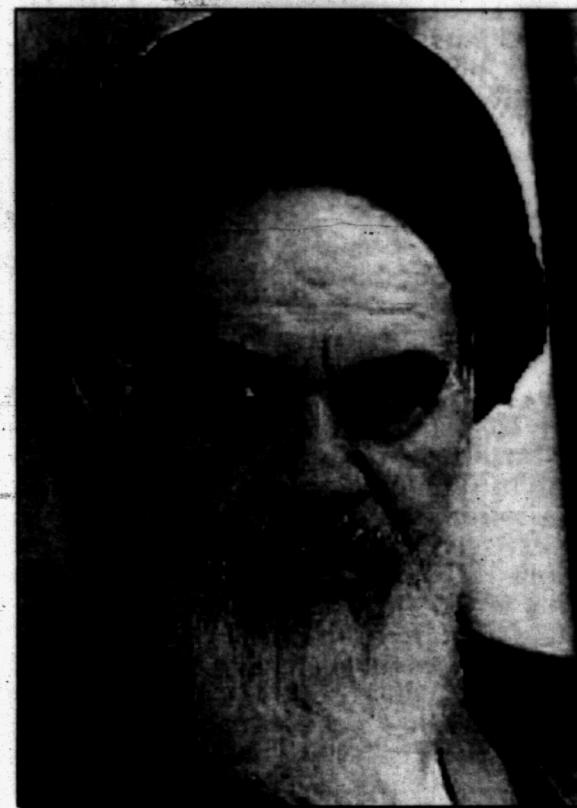
"If it looks like other people have control, you kind of sit back a little bit and work with them until you can take them over, and that's exactly what they are doing in Iraq today," Wagner said. "The Shiites are the ones being sponsored by Iran, and they are the ones following Khomeini's advice ... They are the ones that have the control of Iraq at this point; they are in the majority."

Similarly, Wagner said such attempts took place in Lebanon in the form of a civil war, but the attempt failed there because at least half of the population regards Christianity as their faith.

Although Khomeini's book has been around for years, radical Muslims have some new tactics to aid in their effort, one of which is Internet and e-mail usage, Wagner said.

"The Iranian revolution was called an 'audio-tape revolution' because they purchased an enormous number of audio tapes and distributed them all around the country," he said. "Now what they are doing is they are using, very effectively, e-mails and the Internet."

Additionally, Wagner pointed out that following the first Gulf War, Aljazeera, the Arabic language news network, has come on the scene and helped in the efforts of these militant groups.



Ayatollah Khomeini

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THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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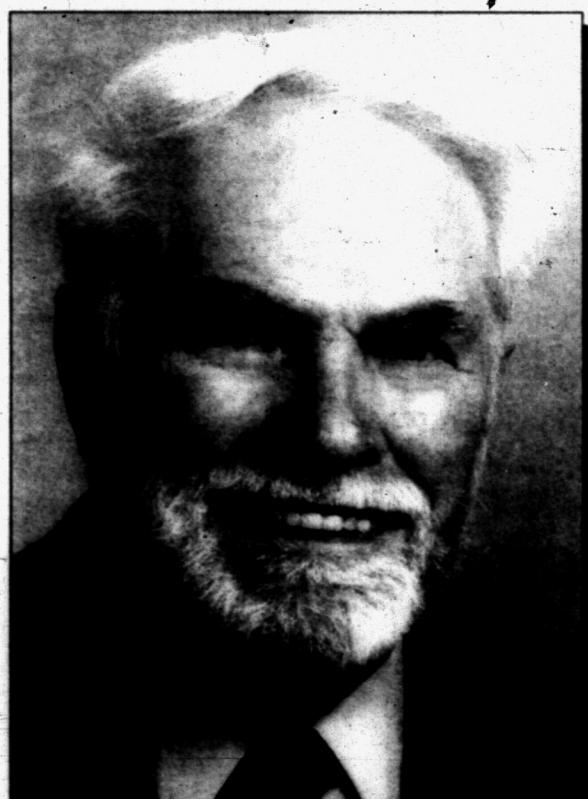
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"They are starting news agencies and starting their own television and radio stations," Wagner said, "and that is going to be an ever-increasing part of Islam's strategy."

One of the ways Americans hold forth democracy is through political elections, Wagner pointed out, noting the difficult situation America faces as, in some cases, elections could fuel the overall strategy of radical Muslims rather than move a country toward true democracy.

"We are the ones that are trying to pressure the people in the Middle East into having elections, but in most cases this has not been a good route to take because the fundamentalists basically have the ear of the people at this time," Wagner said. "They may not have the hearts of the people, but they do have the ear of the people."



Wagner

Tax help available

DALLAS (BP) — Ministers can find additional help in preparing their 2005 federal income tax returns from GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. The annual Ministers Tax Guide for 2005 Returns details recent changes to tax laws and their effect on ministers. "This year's tax guide includes the features ministers have come to expect," said O.S. Hawkins, GuideStone's president and chief executive officer. "The informative free tax guide includes sample tax returns with step-by-step instructions for active and retired ministers, as well as a special pull-out section regarding the federal reporting requirements for churches." An overview of the tax change highlights was written by Richard Hammar, a CPA, attorney and widely published author who specializes in legal and tax issues for ministers. The tax guide can be accessed in an electronic PDF format by visiting the GuideStone website at www.GuideStone.org. Copies also can be obtained by calling customer service at 1-888-98-GUIDE (1-888-984-8433) between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday-Friday Central time. GuideStone was formerly known as the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Looking back

10 years ago

Charles S. "Chuck" Kelly, Jr., a New Orleans Seminary evangelism professor, has been nominated for president of the seminary. If elected, Kelly would be the eighth president in the seminary's history.

20 years ago

Baptists across the state endorse the defeat of a bill filed in the current legislative session by Rep. Ralph Doxey of Holly Springs that would have legalized pari-mutuel (betting pool) gambling in the state.

60 years ago

Practically every major denomination in the United States, except the Southern Baptist Convention, is engaged in a post-war campaign to raise funds for feeding the starving peoples of Europe and Asia, according to H.C. Goerner, missions professor at Southern Seminary.

THE CHURCH ABLAZE

It is an old, well-worn story that tells of a church burning in the night. The pastor is standing at a distance as the blaze lights up the night sky and standing nearby is a man who has never come to church. Though the pastor has often invited him and talked to him about his soul there was always an excuse, a reason, or a simple, "I just didn't make it," response that kept him away from church. There he was in the cold watching the hot fires that burned the church. The pastor walked over to him and said, "I have never seen you at church before." The man replied, "This is the first time I have seen the church on fire." Of course, the point of the story is actually focused on the fire of compassion, passion, and zeal not only literal blazes consuming church facilities.



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1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)

2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)

3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)

4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

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Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Bibb County, Alabama was somewhat the ancestral church of her dad and grandparents. Many of her family were buried in the old Rehobeth cemetery, and it was from that very church that burned to the ground that I preached her grandfather's funeral.

Concerned about the church buildings being destroyed, it immediately became a personal matter filled with thoughts of generations gone by and personal involvement in the death and home going of my in-laws. Who would do such a thing and why? Quickly the investigative news folks discovered that most of the churches were white congregations and concluded that the fires were not racially motivated. They seem to be somewhat relieved that the hatred that would burn a church to the ground was not racially stirred and was less of a hatred. The burning of black churches is reprehensible. The burning of any house of worship is equally bad.

Early on one of the expert mind-readers, understander of everything kind of folks on the news said that these people, whoever they are, are sick and then went on to make a

point that these were not so much acts of criminal activity as they were just expressions of some people's sickness. As I listened to the expert's analysis, I tended to both totally agree and totally disagree. I totally agreed with the fact that these folks are sick, and I totally disagreed with the understanding of what that sickness is.

From a biblical point of view, a strong case can be made that all rebellious, destructive, and hateful activity can be described as sick. But more accurately it must be understood to be a sin sickness that affects us all. Our thoughts, emotions, and everything about us left unchecked by the grace of God will run rampant to destroy, hurt other people, tear down, wreck things around us, annihilate our homes, and even hurt ourselves. We need help and more than that we need saving.

It becomes clear that what we need is not something we

can do for ourselves. Only God Himself can change our wrecked souls. So the very answer to our human dilemma in Christ Jesus is a point of attack by someone who wanted to burn down the facilities of this church. While most of us are shocked, we probably should not be. If the world could be inflamed in hatred so much so that they would crucify the sinless Son of God, why should we be bewildered that attacks would be made on those things that represent Him in our world today?

According to scripture the church is the living, functioning, expressing body of Christ in the world. Jesus intended it to be so, and when the world rises up in warped thinking and enraged passions it ought not to shock us. I pray that no other churches will be burned. I pray that the people who did these destructive acts will be caught and kept from doing this again. I pray that the very love that was poured out to them in Jesus Christ on the cross will find its way to change their sick souls. There are many of us who know that He can make a difference in the human heart. I pray that He will for them.

The author may be contacted at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. E-mail: jfutral@mbcb.org.

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GREAT SACRIFICE

Editor:

A recent letter to the editor expressed the sentiment that most Mississippians would love to have a part-time job such as serving in the legislature. Well, all those people have to do is run. There is no job of which I am aware that has any fewer pre-requisites in order for an applicant to qualify for it. I think all that is required is that one must be a registered voter and have lived in the district in which he or she is running for some minimal period of time.

Like you, I believe that the ladies and gentlemen who serve in our legislature do make a sacrifice to do it. Sure they want the job, or they would not run, and they enjoy doing it, or they would not run for re-election. I do not believe that very many, if any, are in it for their own self interest — and it is not true that incumbents cannot be beat. An incumbent who is doing a good job obviously has an advantage over a challenger, but that is true in non-elective jobs as well. One does not have to look very long to find an incumbent who was defeated in a bid for re-election, or to find an incumbent who chose not to run for re-election because the sacrifice to continue serving simply was too great.

Glynn Kegley
Florence

JUDGE NOT

Editor:

How many more times will you publish and chastise the Governor and those legislators who voted for HB 45, which allows the gaming industry to rebuild Gulf Coast casinos 800 feet inland? It did not expand the gaming industry other than where it already existed.

Please note that the Governor and the Legislature, under the provisions of separation of church and state, cannot represent just the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Governor Barbour is doing an outstanding job to restore the devastated Gulf Coast in an expedient and orderly manner.

The purpose of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is to convert individual persons to refrain from their sinful nature under the power of God. If Southern Baptists were to refrain from visiting casinos, the gaming industry in Mississippi would be severely curtailed.

If I recall correctly, the SBC held their annual conference in Las Vegas several years ago. Unless those persons in attendance carried their tents and sardines with them to that fair city, they greatly subsidized the gaming industry in the state of Nevada while there.

I am not a gambler, but if the state elections were held tomorrow I would cast my vote for Haley Barbour and Senator Dean Kirby. I would also vote for Representative Ray Rogers, who opposed HB 45. All three are great servants of this state. God's Word has taught me to judge not, lest I be judged (Matthew 7:1).

Mickey Corban
Pearl

BY THEIR FRUIT

Editor:

I agree with the letter in the Jackson newspaper that stated, "...not all Baptists are against gambling." As a matter of fact, I believe it is evident that a majority of religious people in Mississippi are not against gambling or many of the other sins the state promotes (abortion, drunkenness, divorce, etc.). Most Mississippians are no different than some in Jesus' day. On the outside they appear religious, but on the inside they are filthy.

It's sad that this state continues to look to evil to be economically prosperous. As Scripture states, the love of money is the root of all evil (1 Timothy 6:10). The majority of our government leaders believe that we need gambling to bring back our coast.

The real problem is man's heart. Most of our government leaders are church members but only have a form of Godliness. If they had true Godliness, gambling would not even be an issue in this state but just like the Pharisees, they are looking out for their own welfare.

I know this will anger many and some will say I am judging, but did not Jesus say that we will know them by their fruit (Matthew 7:16)? Telling the truth is what got Jesus hung on the cross. Those who are true Christians are called upon to deny self, take up the cross, and follow Jesus. Real Christians must promote God's truth.

It appears we still have a few real Christians in government. Pray for others to be added.

Thomas Winn
Jackson

THANKS FOR STAND

Editor:

The trustees of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission (CAC), in its quarterly meeting on November 15, 2005, voted unanimously to commend you on your recent articles in The Baptist Record regarding gambling becoming land-based.

Your numerous editorials were bold and courageous. Your appearance on national television shows and local radio stations also helped inform Mississippi Baptists of

the dangers of gambling. Thank you for all your hard work. The state of the Christian Action Commission and the trustees appreciate your stand and your willingness to encourage others to do the same.

We'll be praying for you and the staff of The Baptist Record in the coming new year.

Doug Broome, president
CAC Board of Trustees
Jackson

(Editor's note: Broome serves as pastor of First Church, Yazoo City.)

WHAT PRICE?

Editor:

My thanks to you and your paper for standing firm against the casino legislation. People are easily deceived when money is offered, because we all can see is the dollar sign.

The report of \$500,000 per day in taxes and jobs for over 14,000 workers is impressive, but to pay that kind of money would require monumental income. Where does this revenue originate? It probably comes from those who gamble whether living in Mississippi or out of state. How much money leaves our state to fill the pockets of the casino owners? That has never been mentioned nor had there been any report concerning the "good" the taxes they have paid has brought about.

The legacy we are leaving our children and grandchildren is a state which at some point may be labeled, "The Nevada of the South." The majority of the Legislature sold us out. We have been bought, but at what price and who will pay the bill?

As I see it, the only salvation for us now is to not participate and I, for one, do not intend to darken the doors of a casino. Thanks again for your thoughts and the list of how those in the Legislature voted.

Mignon Price
Summit

THOUGHT-PROVOKING

Editor:

In a recent letter to the editor entitled, God in Control, the phrase, "God removed the casinos," was thought-provoking. I never thought that just to prove a point, God would gut my church like a great fish, spewing its innards out to sea. Nor would I have dreamed that He, the Divine Creator of the Universe, would destroy the homes of my friends and loved ones just to tell the world, "I'm in control!"

God is in control! It's His creation who aren't. To

imply that God "removed" the casinos just to prove a point is beyond my realm of comprehension. Unless I've misread the Scriptures, sin entered the world through Adam and Eve — not Katrina.

Anthony Wayne Kalberg
Gulfport

CARING FOR NEEDY

Editor:

I would like for your readers to know what First Church, Durant, did for the people displaced by Hurricane Katrina. We had approximately 130 people come to our church. We fed all of them and gave clothes to the ones who needed them. We used our Sunday School rooms for them to sleep so that they could have some privacy. We had different races and nationalities.

Our pastor, Matt Brady, did so much while they were at the church. He spent 24 hours a day at the church, sleeping in his office. He carried them to doctors, took the children swimming, found places for them to live, helped find their loved ones, and took a family of five into his home until their house was ready.

Several area churches helped feed them and many people gave money to help. When we had no electricity or water for a couple of days, one church fixed a hot meal and brought it and also brought a tank of water. Some donated a refrigerator and freezer, and someone brought a pickup truck loaded with ice and lots of food.

Bro. Matt says that he had so much help, but he was a strong Christian leader. One of the displaced people told me that Bro. Matt gave them his cell phone and that they could go to the church office and use that phone.

Bro. Matt and his helpers made me proud to be a member of First Church, Durant.

Mary K. Wilson
Durant



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.



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STAFF CHANGES

Hickory Grove Church, Sumrall, has called Kenneth E. Walters as pastor, effective Jan. 15. He had served as interim pastor, as associate pastor of First, Picayune, and as pastor of several other Mississippi churches.

First Church, Charleston, has called John Price as pastor, effective Feb. 1. He had previously served Calvary Church, Silver Creek, as pastor.



Amanda, Griffin, and Williams, Steele Church, Scott Association

Steele Church, Scott Association, has called Austin Griffin as youth minister. Shown are Amanda Griffin, Griffin, and pastor Reggie Williams.

First Church, Mulvane, Kansas, has called Cody Busby as pastor. He comes from Park Place Church, Brandon, where he served as minister of youth and recreation.

REVIVALS

Edwards Church, Edwards: Revival, March 5 - 8; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 6 p.m.; Justin Peters, speaker; Joey Wolfe, music.

Liberty Church, Jefferson, Carroll Co.: Revival, Feb. 26 - Mar. 1; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; William Milam, Milton, Fla., speaker.

Meadowview Church, Starkville: Revival, Feb. 26 - Mar. 1; Sun., 10:15 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Jim Futral, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, speaker; Steve and Becky Carver, One Way Ministries, music; for information, call (662) 323-2963; Ronnie Hatfield, pastor.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Deacon Ordination, Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale



2. All-Men's Choir, Friendship East Church, Charleston



3. Thornton Honored, Clark-Venable Church, Newton



4. Youth Sponsor Hanging of the Green, Grandview Church, Pearl

1. **Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale, recently ordained Dustin Tanner as a fourth-generation deacon. Shown with Tanner are Steven Tanner, Michael Morgan, Kristi Tanner, Freddy McLeod, Gene Havard, and Harley Havard.**
2. **Friendship East Church, Charleston, celebrated men's day Jan. 22 with an all-men's choir, with short talks and testimonies. Shown are the participants.**
3. **Marion Thornton was honored by an appreciation gift from the Triple L group of Clark-Venable Church, Newton, for her hard work in organizing and directing the senior seniors of the church. Shown are Thornton, Mollie Hayes, and Frances Jordan.**
4. **The youth of Grandview Church, Pearl, sponsored the Hanging of the Green program for the church, decorating the tree with flags honoring the military and Hurricane Katrina victims. Enough money was collected to purchase winter items for four families in Waveland.**
5. **Mt. Comfort Church, Bruce, recently dedicated their new church bus.**
6. **The RAs and GAs of Lakeland Church, Mantachie, participated in a white cross project. Shown are some of the participants.**
7. **Monticello Church, Monticello, exceeded their Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal of \$19,000, giving \$23,767.27.**
8. **First Church, Natchez, recently honored minister of education/administration Dan Wynn for twenty-five years of service.**
9. **Jimmy Porter, Executive Director-Treasurer of the Christian Action Commission, Mississippi Baptist Convention, will conduct a Christian Concerns Conference Mar. 5 - 8 at Pleasant Hill Church, Columbus. Sun., 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.**
10. **Lee Yancey, Senior Consultant, Christian Action Commission, Mississippi Baptist Convention, was elected president of the Choose Life Advisory Committee (CLAC) during their Jan. 24 meeting. The CLAC meets quarterly to disburse funds generated by the sale of the Choose Life license plates to crisis pregnancy centers and adoption agencies across Mississippi.**
11. **Cedar View Church, Olive Branch, will host a community singing featuring The Almost Famous Carl Crane Singers Feb. 18. Call (662) 895-2661 for information.**
12. **North Carrollton Church, North Carrollton, will hold a Marriage Enrichment Seminar Feb. 17 - 19.**



6. RAs/GAs White Cross Project, Lakeland Church, Mantachie



5. Dedication of New Church Bus, Mt. Comfort Church, Bruce

\$30/couple. For more information, call (662) 237-0047 or 897-9777.

13. Kokomo Church, Kokomo, exceeded their state mis-

sions offering goal of \$1000 by receiving \$1,365, and their Lottie Moon Christmas offering goal of \$1000 by receiving \$1,700.

COLLEGE AND SEMINARY NEWS



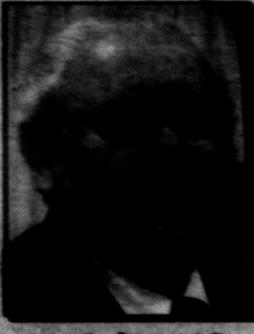
1. Miller, Shows, Courtney, and Street, MC



6. Ward, "Hank the Cowdog," and Barbour, WCC

1. Mississippi College hosted the February meeting of the Board of the Baptist Ministerial Education (BME) of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. David Miller, Associate Professor of English at MC, spoke to the board on Mississippi College's Mission Statement. Pictured from left: David Miller, Clinton, speaker; Gary Shows, Hattiesburg, Temple Baptist Church, Chair of BME; Ruthie Courtney, Madison, Secretary, BME; Lynda Street, Clinton, MC Campus Representative to BME.

2. Kenneth M. Quinn, instructor of art at Mississippi College, and long-time Mississippi art educator, gave the Kenneth M. Quinn Mississippi Regional Art Collection to Mississippi College. The new Samuel Marshall Gore Art Gallery, scheduled for completion in 2006, will house the collection.



2. Quinn, MC

3. More than 1,000 people ranging from high school and college students to seminary students, faculty and curious visitors gathered at Southeastern Seminary Feb. 3-4 to hear some of the nation's preeminent scholars discuss Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* and the issues it raises regarding the reliability of the New Testament.

4. The Joseph and Nancy Fail School of Nursing at William Carey College received a \$9000 grant from the Nursing 2005 Foundation which will be used for stethoscopes, computers, school supplies and other nursing supplies.

5. A photography exhibit featuring the works of senior mass communication majors at William Carey College began Wednesday, Feb. 8 and will run through March 10 from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. in the Lucile Parker Gallery on the Hattiesburg campus.

6. Patricia Ward, dean of the school of education; "Hank the Cowdog" from children's literature; and Mississippi's first lady Marsha Barbour are pictured here during the William Carey College Young Authors Celebration held on the Hattiesburg campus. Approximately 320 students from ten area schools attended the day long event which featured ten published authors and illustrators, writing and art workshops and opportunities to video tape the students reading excerpts from their own books.

7. Mississippi College announced the first recipient of the Charles "Puddin" Davis Scholarship Fund, Sarah Biddy, of Edmond, Okla. The scholarship was established in honor of Charles Davis, retired professor in the MC Christian Studies Department. To make contributions to the fund in honor of Charles Davis, please call the Mississippi College Office of Advancement at (601) 925-3257 for information. Shown are Charles Davis, Sarah Biddy, and MC President, Lee Royce.

8. Mississippi College held its tenth annual Career Day on February 7 in A.E. Woods Coliseum. Career Day gave MC students and alumni the opportunity to make contact with over 75 businesses and companies that were represented at the event.

9. Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Tex., will host its inaugural Frank B. Kellogg Camp Meeting April 20-21. The meeting will feature award-winning gospel artists The Dixie Melody Boys, Southwestern Sound, the musical recruiting team of Southwestern Seminary, and the preaching of Jimmy Draper, recently retired president of LifeWay Christian Resources. Cost for the event is \$55 per person. Registration information is available at www.swbts.edu/conferences or by calling 1-877-474-GROW (4769).

10. The Joe Roberts Forensics Society at William Carey College will host the second annual High

School Forensics Camp July 17-21, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., on the Hattiesburg campus. Camp cost is \$275 for day campers and \$375 for overnight campers. Registration deadline is June 1; for more information, call (601) 318-6775 or (800) 962-5991 ext. 775 or daniel.schabot@wmcarey.edu.



7. Davis, Biddy, and Royce, MC



8. Career Day Participants and Spouses, MC

Miss. CP chases record

Gifts from Mississippi Baptist churches to the Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP) in January came close to eclipsing the all-time record, according to Jim Putral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which disburses the funds. The January giving total of \$3,497,723 is second only to the record set in January 2003 of \$3,501,219. The January 2006 total is 8.95% higher than the \$3,210,450 given in the same period in 2005. The 2006 Mississippi CP budget of \$31,314,491, was approved by messengers to the 2005 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. A total of \$2,609,541 is needed each month to meet the convention board's budget for 2006. In addition to helping support more than 10,700 missionaries in the U.S. and around the world through affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, Mississippi CP also helps fund such programs as the State Baptist Student Union Retreat on February 17-18 at Camp Garaywa in Clinton, the Christian Performing Arts Festival on February 24-25 at First Church, Clinton, and the Sunday School Equiper Training Event on March 6 at Highland Colony Church, Ridgeland.

SBC CP up for month

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Contributions through the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) for January were \$20,417,401, 39.84%, or \$5,825,162, above the \$14,622,239 given in the month before, and 0.51%, or \$104,444, above the \$20,342,957 received in January 2005, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President and Chief Executive Officer Morris H. Chapman. As of Jan. 31, the year-to-date total of \$65,872,491.07 for Cooperative Program Missions is \$742,451, or 1.1%, under the \$66,614,942.28 received at the same point in 2005. The SBC fiscal year began in October. The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state and regional conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention. The Cooperative Program total includes receipts from individuals, churches, state conventions and fellowships for distribution according to the 2004-05 Cooperative Program Allocation Budget. Baptist ministries globally and across North America. It is separate from the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Fund of which 100 percent of monies go to aid the needy in the general public. The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state and regional conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Rainer takes helm of LifeWay Christian Resources

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP and local reports) — Trustees of LifeWay Christian Resources welcomed Thom S. Rainer as the company's ninth president, named a new vice president and executive associate to the president, and designated retired president James T. Draper Jr. as president emeritus during their semiannual meeting February 6-7.

Rainer presided over his first trustee meeting, setting an ambitious agenda for the 115-year-old organization in the days ahead.

Trustees approved a recommendation to name Tom Hellams vice president and executive associate to the president, effective immediately. Hellams will serve as chief coordinating staff member of the executive management team and serve the president in strategic denominational and related external roles. Since 1997 Hellams had served as executive assistant to the president of Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

The trustees also adopted a resolution designating retired LifeWay President James T. Draper Jr. president emeritus "in recognition of the exemplary service performed during his tenure at LifeWay, and awarded in anticipation of his future service to LifeWay." Draper will continue to take a leadership role in the company's \$29 million major-donor campaign called, A Defining Moment. The position is unpaid and does not confer employee or officer status.

Trustees also approved an increase of up to 4.4% in the price of Sunday School resources, effective spring 2007, to offset increased production costs, and shipping and processing costs.



Rainer

Jerry Rhyne, vice-president for finance and business services, reported that LifeWay's fiscal 2005 revenues reached a record \$432.7 million, and that LifeWay experienced a strong first quarter of the new fiscal year with revenues of \$115.2 million, more than \$10 million above revenues for the same period last year.

As of Dec. 31, 2005, LifeWay's full-time equivalent employee count was 2,737, nearly 400 below budget. Rhyne said the variance was due to lower temporary staffing in LifeWay Christian Stores, and delays in hiring in the church resources and Broadman & Holman divisions.

Finally, Rhyne said LifeWay has used \$4.3 million of reserve funds to aid the victims of Hurricane Katrina and Rita out of the \$6 million trustees approved last September.

Ken Stephens, Broadman & Holman Publishers vice-president, reported that the division missed its revenue target for fiscal 2005 by 10%, but reduced costs to provide a positive contribution. Bibles led sales for the year.

Stephens said B&H has made recent personnel changes and developed new strategies in sales, marketing, product development and operations. The division will track new markets and new opportunities such as investing in backlist and special packaging.

New products in 2006 will include: Teen Virtue 2, by Vicki Courtney; A Simple Church, by LifeWay President Thom S. Rainer; Spirit Warriors 2, by Stephen Baldwin; and A Threat to Justice: The Justice Riders, Book Two, by Chuck Norris.

Holman Bible Outreach International, established last year to facilitate the translation, production and distribution of affordable Bibles and

Standard Bible for Africa in conjunction with Oasis International. B&H also has launched a new commitment to academic publishing through B&H Academic.

Corporate Affairs Vice President Mike Arrington presented an overview of the building projects completed and underway at Ridgecrest and Glorieta conference centers and reported that Glorieta's first-quarter revenue grew 23% over the same period last year. Several thousand spiritual decisions have been made at the conference centers over the past year, and registrations for Camp Ridgecrest for Boys and Camp Crestridge for Girls are up significantly over last year.

Arrington also outlined LifeWay's three-year major donor campaign, A Defining Moment, designed to raise \$29 million. Retired LifeWay President James T. Draper Jr. is leading the campaign to raise funds for global ministry projects such as Share Jesus Without Fear and the Everyone Can Kingdom Challenge; local and international discipleship projects; the True Love Waits abstinence campaign; and Holman Bible Outreach International.



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NOBTS courses offered at Mississippi locations

JACKSON, Ms. (Special) — March 20 begins the fourth of eight courses at five locations in Mississippi sponsored by New Orleans Baptist Seminary. The eight courses are Song Leading, Worship Planning, Reading Music: Rhythm/Pitch, Reading Music: Harmony/Melody, Hymnology, Music Administration/Staff Relations, Survey of Music Resources, and Class Voice. These courses are designed to provide basic training for bivocational music directors and other music leaders in churches.

The eight courses meet two hours per week. Each course is eight weeks in length.

The cycle of courses is scheduled over a two-year period. Each course is independent and has no prerequisite. Each student who completes the eight courses earns a Church Music Certificate from New Orleans Seminary plus a credit of eight hours toward an on campus degree program. There is a one-time registration fee of \$25.00. The cost of each course is \$125.00.

A \$60.00 scholarship is available for all first-time students. Students already enrolled are not eligible. The grant is limited to one person per church.

The fourth course, Reading Music: Harmony/Melody, will meet once a week for two

hours for eight consecutive weeks at the following locations and times:

Broadmoor Church, Madison — beginning March 20 (7-9 p.m.). Jimmy McCaleb, teacher. (601) 924-1233.

First Church, Booneville — beginning March 20 (7-9 p.m.). LuAnne Ford, teacher. (662) 728-6272.

Northcrest Church, Meridian — beginning March 20 (6:30 - 8:30 p.m.). Buddy McElroy, teacher. (601) 681-6615, or (601) 679-1887.

Hernando Church, Hernando — beginning March 20 (7-9 p.m.). Barry Tweedy, teacher. (662) 429-6361.

Tri-County Associational Building, Columbia — beginning March 21 (6:30-8:30 p.m.). Jimmy McCaleb, teacher. (601) 924-1233.

These classes could also be offered at other locations in the state, where 8-10 students are interested in enrolling. For more information, contact Jimmy McCaleb at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3273 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 273. E-mail: jmccaleb@mbcb.org.

MS POSITIONS

NORTH CENTRAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION is accepting resumes for Director of Missions position. Please send to search committee chairman, c/o North Central Baptist Association, 1045 Fairfield, Grenada MS. 38901. All resumes must be received by March 17.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SHANNON, MISS. is seeking full-time music and youth minister. Special consideration is given to individual with youth ministerial experience. Send resume to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 21, Shannon, MS 38868.

PART-TIME/BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC: HEUCKS RETREAT BAPTIST CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN, MISSISSIPPI

is seeking a part-time/bi-vocational Minister of Music with interests in traditional/contemporary worship styles. Please send resumes and references to Heucks Retreat Baptist Church, 2167 Heucks Retreat Rd. NE, Brookhaven, MS 39601. Attention: Chairman, Personnel Committee or call 601-672-3518.

MINISTER OF MUSIC: FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF GREENVILLE, Miss., seeks a dynamic individual to lead its worship and music ministry. Seminary education with at least 3 years experience preferred. The position is full-time. Average SS attendance is 400. Send resumes to Dr. James L. Nichols, P.O. Box 1163, Greenville, MS 38702 or jnichols@fbccgreenville.net. Attention: Terry Warren.

BETHESDA BAPTIST CHURCH, TERRY is seeking a part-time/bi-vocational Minister of Youth. Please send resumes with references to the attention of Personnel Director, 13628 Midway Road, Terry, MS 39170.

BRIAR HILL BAPTIST CHURCH, FLORENCE, MS. is accepting resumes for the new ministerial position of Minister of Education. Special consideration will be given to candidates with experience. Full-time applicants are preferred but part-time applicants will be considered. Please send resume to Briar Hill Baptist Church, P.O. Box 129, Florence, MS 39073. Attention: Terry Warren.

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BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR: If interested, please send resume to pastor search committee, Calvary Baptist Church, 66252 Memphis Arlington Road, Bartlett, TN 38135-2462.

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF MT OLIVE is now accepting resumes for a full-time minister of music. Masters degree desired. Video or DVD would be greatly appreciated. Please submit resumes to FBCMO, attn: search committee, 3200 Mt. Olive Road, Mt. Olive, AL 35117, church phone (205) 631-4401.

CHURCH PEW UPHOLSTERY, free estimates. Davis Upholstery, Quitman, Miss., phone (601) 776-6617.

S.D. bill would propel abortion back to high court

PIERRE, S.D. (BP) — In a direct challenge to the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, the South Dakota House of Representatives easily passed a bill February 9 that would ban nearly all abortions in the state. The bill passed by a vote of 47-22 and now goes to the state Senate, where a vote is expected to be tight. Ten of the Senate's 35 members are sponsors.

It is not known whether Gov. Mike Rounds, a pro-life Republican, would sign it if it passes.

Supporters of the bill, which has an exception for the mother's life, hope it leads to the overturning of Roe, the infamous decision that legalized abortion nationwide. Opponents of the bill tried unsuccessfully February 9 to add an amendment making an exception for rape and incest. If it passes the Senate and is signed into law, a legal challenge almost certainly will follow.

"I honestly believe that this is the time to address this issue," state Rep. Roger W. Hunt, a Republican and the bill's chief House sponsor, said during floor debate.

The Senate sponsor is Democratic state Sen. Julie Bartling. "I think South Dakota has always been what I call a pro-life state, and I think it's ready to step up and be in the forefront and make some of these first moves," Bartling told Baptist Press. "I would say the majority of South Dakotans would favor a ban on abortions."

The bill would make it a felony for anyone to perform an abortion. The mother would not be charged with a crime. The language of the bill,

named the Women's Health and Human Life Protection Act, says that "life begins at the time of conception" and that scientific advances since 1973 have proven that the unborn child is indeed life.

The bill says the goal is to "fully protect the rights, interests, and health of the pregnant mother, the rights, interest, and life of her unborn child, and the mother's fundamental natural intrinsic right to a relationship with her child." The bill is based on the findings of a task force that studied abortion.

South Dakota's legislature passed similar legislation in 2004, only to see Rounds issue a "style-and-form" veto, sending it back to the legislature for minor changes. Rounds said in '04 that he agreed with the bill's intent, but was fearful that its wording would lead a court to strike down not only the bill but also the state's other restrictions on abortion. The House agreed to Rounds' changes, but the Senate defeated the reworded bill, 18-17, when a senator who previously had supported it switched and voted against it.

Hunt told BP he believes he has the votes in the Senate to pass the bill and is confident Rounds will sign it. Since that 2004 vote, an election has taken place.

Although other states are considering legislation that would challenge Roe, South Dakota's strong pro-life legislature and pro-life governor make it unique. "Whether it's because of our legislation or some other [state's] legislation, the goal is to prohibit the killing and the termination of life of all of those unborn children," Hunt told BP.

The bill, though, doesn't have the support of all pro-lifers, some of whom say the Supreme Court isn't ready to overturn Roe. If the bill becomes law and is overturned by the Supreme Court, these pro-lifers say, then the high court's legal precedent for Roe will have been strengthened.

Of the Supreme Court's nine members, five are on record as supporting abortion rights. One of those five, Justice Anthony Kennedy, voted with the minority in 2000 to uphold Nebraska's ban on partial-birth abortion. It is not known how new Chief Justice John Roberts and new Justice Samuel Alito would vote on a Roe challenge, but Hunt hopes Roberts and Alito will help shape the court.

In addition, Hunt notes that Justice John Paul Stevens, who supports Roe, will turn 86 in April and could retire. A challenge to Roe, Hunt said, could take three years to make it to the high court.

"I believe Roberts and Alito will bring some new philosophy to the court, new arguments," Hunt said. "Coupled with those new arguments are going to be the technological and medical advances that we have seen. We [also] know so much more about post-abortion problems [compared to what was known in 1973]."

Speaking during floor debate, Hunt noted that the unborn child's DNA is different from the mother's. "It is not just some tissue in the mother," he said.

Pro-lifers have taken advantage of ultrasound technology to make great advances in recent years. Particularly helpful has been the 4-D ultrasound, which allows a mother to see her baby moving in the womb. The tiniest features, such as the sucking of the thumb, can be seen.

Hunt compared the Roe v. Wade decision to the 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson decision that affirmed racial segregation. It was reversed in 1954 by the famous Brown v. Board of Education ruling.

"There would not have been Brown v. Board of Education had someone not decided they wanted to, in essence, have a prior decision of the United States Supreme Court set aside," Hunt told BP, "and so the point to be made is that somebody has to present the issue to the Supreme Court to give them the opportunity to overrule Roe vs. Wade."

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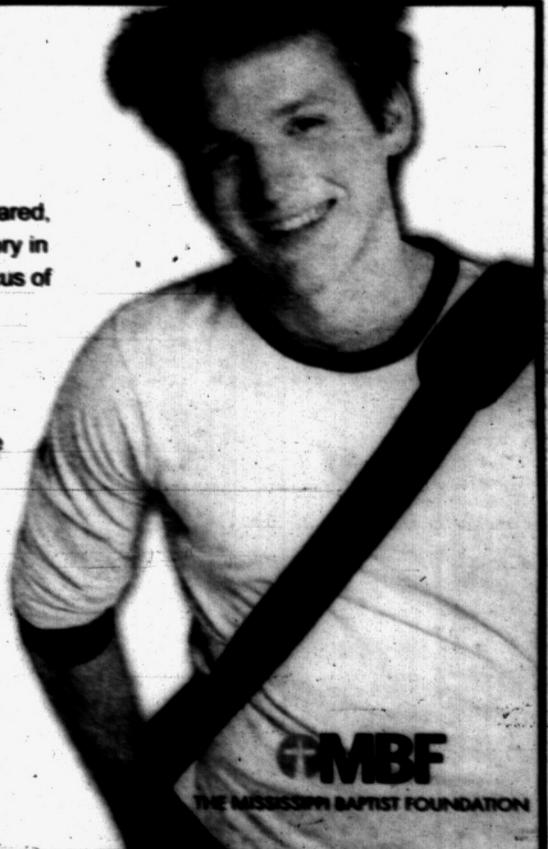
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For more information about the Mississippi Baptist Foundation Scholarship Ministry, please contact our office at Post Office Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, telephone us at (601) 292-3210, or (800) 748-1651, or visit our website, www.mbc.org/agencies/mbf. A completed application must be received in the MBF office by April 30.



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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

What If I'm Uncertain?

Jeremiah 20:1-18

By Don Hicks

Jeremiah told those who wanted to stop him from prophesying that "If I say: I won't mention Him or speak any longer in His name, His message becomes a fire burning in my heart, shut up in my bones. I become tired of holding it in, and I cannot prevail." (Jeremiah 20:9). Jeremiah would not have known he could not hold God's message in if he had not tried to hold it in at some time in the past.

Paul told the Corinthians "I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" (I Corinthians 9:16) [NIV]. Yet Jeremiah's fire burning in his heart or Paul's compulsion to preach do not keep doubts from arising.

Jeremiah said he was a laughingstock and in constant disgrace and derision because of his service to God. Look at verses 7 and 8 of our focal passage: "You deceived me, Lord, and I was deceived. You seized me and prevailed. I am a laughingstock all the time; everyone ridicules me. For whenever I speak, I cry out — I proclaim: Violence and destruction! because the word of the Lord has become for me constant disgrace and derision." By verse 11 Jeremiah's faith has strengthened and he says "But the Lord is with me like a violent warrior. Therefore, my persecutors will stumble and not prevail."

In times of doubt we need to be certain of God's call. We

Hicks

need to be able to say with Paul "I am compelled to preach" or "I am compelled to teach or minister or [you fill in your blank.]" Are you involved in your place of service because you know that God has "seized you and prevailed" like Jeremiah?

Pashhur the priest and chief officer had had Jeremiah beaten and put in the stocks by the Upper Benjamin Gate to the temple. This probably would be enough to cause any one some doubts. The end of the twentieth chapter of Jeremiah is a lament caused by the prophet's doubt. Read this lament — Jeremiah 20:14-18 — in your own Bible.

Jeremiah's lament included cursing the day he was born. Cursing the man who brought news to his father of his own birth. Jeremiah expressed regret that he was not aborted before he was born. Jeremiah was stressed, discouraged, and I think had real

doubt but continued to deliver his unpopular prophecies.

The early chapters of the book of Acts have similar accounts where men of God were ordered by the priests not to preach God's message in the temple. In the 4th chapter of Acts Peter and John were ordered "not to preach or teach at all in the name of Jesus." But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it's right in the sight of God [for us] to listen to you rather than to God, you decide; for we are unable to stop speaking about what we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:19-20). At this time the priest flinched and did not find any way to punish Peter and John.

But in the very next chapter of Acts the clash between the temple authorities and the disciples repeated just as in Jeremiah's time there were repeated clashes between those seeking to control the temple for their own purposes and the men God called to speak.

The Sanhedrin's leaders said "didn't we strictly order you

not to teach in this name [Jesus]? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to bring this man's blood on us!" But Peter and the apostles replied, "We must obey God rather than men," (Acts 5:28-29). This episode concluded "After they called in the apostles and had them flogged, they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus and released them. Then they went out from the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to be dishonored on behalf of the name. Every day in the temple complex, and in various homes, they continued teaching and proclaiming the good news that the Messiah is Jesus," (Acts 5:40-42).

Jeremiah said he was a laughingstock and in constant disgrace and derision because of his service to God. Yet Jeremiah continued to serve God.

Hicks is a member of First Church, Clinton.

Christ" will be on our efforts. We must daily seek wisdom from God in our decisions.

Pray for Missionaries, Romans 15:30-31

Missionaries face so many dangers we may not know or understand. One missionary speaking to a group made the comment that she did not speak often of her dangers or trials but always focused on how the prayers of Christians had brought the power of God to bring her through. They feel these prayers. They have answered, "Here I am, send me." We must support them with our prayers.

Paul saw great danger ahead and asked the believers to pray as he made his trip. What a great investment in ministries we can have as we obey Christ's command, "to be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

"Send the Light."

Heap is a member of Calvary Church, Waynesboro.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Send the Light

Romans 15:14-20, 22-25, 28-32

By Shirley Heap

We are given the same commission the Lord gave His disciples before He ascended (Matt. 28:18-20). We know it as the Great Commission. It is not a suggestion. It is a command. If we call him "Lord, Lord" why do we not follow his commands?

When He gave the commission, He gave two promises, 1) His unlimited power, and 2) He will always be with us. If we fail to do what our Lord has told us to do we miss marvelous blessings, plus our Lord's heart is grieved. Paul's writings reveal his heartfelt desire to make his Lord proud. Souls coming into the kingdom of God are the greatest offering of praise we can present to our Lord. May our prayers join with Paul's that God's will be seen in our lives as the gospel goes forth.

Carry Out Mission Activities, Romans 14:14-19

Paul speaks in a loving, complimentary way of the Roman Christians' goodness. He commends them for their concern for others, and their knowledge and ability in instruction. Paul spoke of how God had used him. He recognized it was God's doing, not his own. Our pastor recently said, "What we can do our own does not compare with what God can do through us." That's so true. If we allow God to use us even in small ways the results may not be known until the judgment. (Matt. 25:24-40)

Use Broad Strategy, Romans 15:20, 22-24a

The goal that Paul expresses in Romans 15:20 is of such



Heap

magnitude that I am overwhelmed. Our concern goes out to those who have never heard. We stress praying for our missionaries, but do we pray, "Here I am, send me" (Isa. 5:8b), or for the Lord to send our children? We can never be sure that God hears our prayers until we broaden our strategy. All prayers for missions are important, but let's be real...God knows our hearts. We must be willing, be available, and be attentive to God's voice. God loves for His child to say "yes" before God asks the question. I read somewhere, "I will not work my soul to save, that work my Lord has done, But I will work like any slave for the love of God's dear Son." That is a worthy goal.

Assist Missionaries, Romans 15:24b-25

Our missionaries have given up so much for the gospel's sake. They desire to know they are supported back home. We

can share in these blessings by giving, praying and personally contacting our missionaries with encouragement.

Roman believers probably could not understand all Paul wrote about, yet they were growing. The churches in Macedonia and Achaia had given out of their poverty to help Christians in Jerusalem because they heard of a need. When we feel a need as our own then we will accept the responsibility to act. Pray that the Holy Spirit will reveal the needs of believers around you.

Work Within God's Will, Romans 15:28-29, 32

As the Lord's servants we must truly seek to have open ears and open hearts to know His will. Paul was such a dynamic worker and seemed to work so furiously that I'm sure the Lord may have had to slow him down at times. Paul had ideas of his own, but the Holy Spirit had to rein him in so that Paul's own responsibilities would not override God's will. God's Word teaches that we must do things in order so "the blessings of

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

THE BAPTIST RECORD

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lit.

All news items are subject to editing,

and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape-, building-, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

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Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

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GAGPDON WGDPTB SED-
STLDPDA NRT VPDAWEC;
QIN NRTX SEIBW YPDW
DEDT ESSCOPED DEL
YGIBN; YELGOCISR GO RT
ZGO YGPNRIB, DTPNRTL
ZGO NRTLT GDX TLLEL EL
YCIBN YEIDW PD RPC.
WGDPTB OPN : YEIL

Clue: H = P

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Nahum One:Seven.



14. BYKOTA Sunday School Class, Eastside Church, Pearl



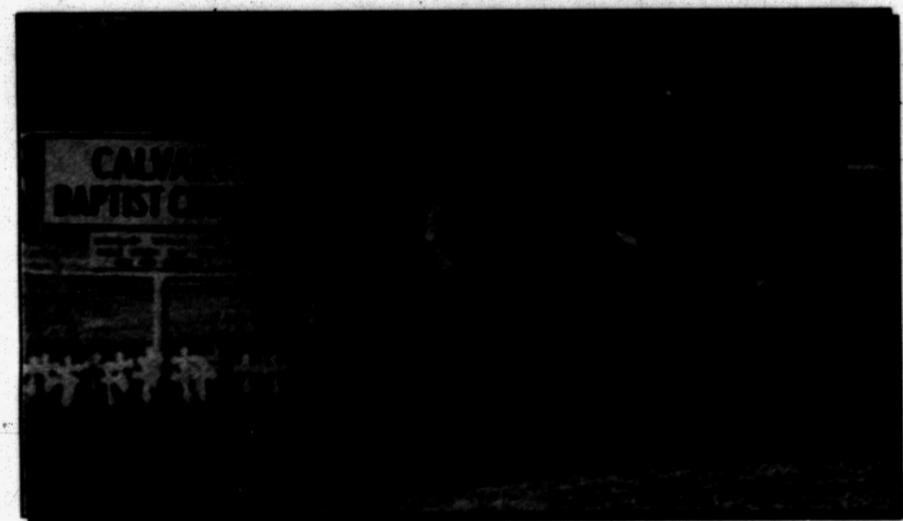
15. Deacon Ordination, Damascus Church, Flora



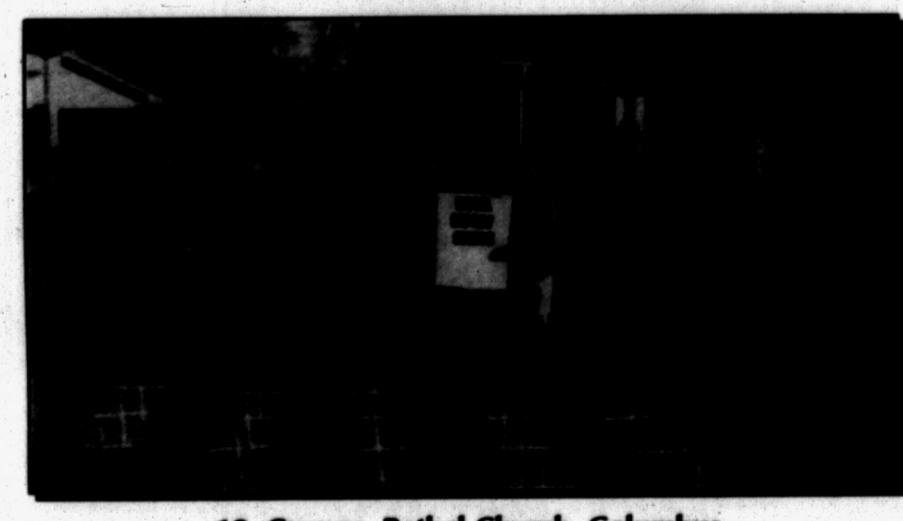
16. Christmas Program, Concord Church, Benton-Tippah Association



17. Organ Dedication, Clark-Venable Church, Decatur



18. Crosses, Calvary Church, Canton



19. Crosses, Bethel Church, Columbus

14. The BYKOTA Sunday School class of Eastside Church, Pearl, sponsored a Christmas party for residents of Jaquith Nursing Home, Mississippi State Hospital, Whitfield, Dec. 14. Shown are the participants.
15. Damascus Church, Flora, recently ordained Tony Hendricks, James Ray Tacker, and Buster Speaks as deacons. Shown are Hendricks, Tacker, Speaks, and pastor Sonny Bradshaw.
16. The children and youth of Concord Church, Benton-Tippah Association, presented the Christmas program, My Goodnight Christmas, Dec. 18, under the direction of Debbie Kennedy, youth director, and Gary Kennedy, music director. Shown are the participants.
17. Clark-Venable Church, Decatur, has purchased and installed a 50-stop, three-manual Allen Renaissance Quantum organ, provided by a gift from Frances Haik Jordan and her son and daughter-in-law, Mac and Sunny Haik of Houston, Tex. Shown, from left, are pastor Mark Vincent; Barbara Deaton; Charlotte Smith; and Alex Craft; seated at organ are Eddie Smith and Frances Haik Jordan.
18. Calvary Church, Canton, placed 25 white crosses in front of the church to represent 50 million babies killed by abortion.
19. Bethel Church, Columbus, participated in Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. Shown are 50 crosses and several church members, remembering the unborn killed by abortion.
20. Southside Church, Vicksburg, will sponsor Heaven's Gates and Hell's Flames, Feb. 26 - 28, 7 p.m. For more information, call (601) 631-0047 or 661-0756.
21. Joe K. Hill has retired from Anding Church, Bentonia, and is available for supply, interim, or revival. Call (601) 373-2459 or 750-3436.
22. The Agricultural Development Foundation (ADF) will meet Feb. 18 at Bowmar Church, Vicksburg, at 10 a.m., followed by lunch. Mission speaker is R.T. Buckley, retired IMB missionary to Bangladesh, with agricultural reports given from Mexico, Venezuela, Honduras, China, and Bangladesh. For information, call (601) 924-6429 or (662) 323-5646.
23. Highland Church, Natchez, will host The Fragile Stone in a youth praise and worship service Feb. 19, 5 p.m., and Chosen Music Ministries, Feb. 26, 5 p.m.
24. Mt. Vernon Church, Newton Association, will host a gospel singing Feb. 25, 7 p.m., featuring the Men of Music, Mobile, Ala. A love offering will be taken.
25. The Providentials will be in concert at McAdams Church, McAdams, Feb. 26, 6 p.m. A love offering will be taken. James Young, pastor.
26. Mt. Carmel Church, Carthage, is looking for pictures of former pastors, deacons, Sunday School teachers, etc., to be included on a special DVD for their homecoming Oct. 8. If you have any
- photos for this project, contact the church at (601) 267-5717, or call (601) 267-0341 or 267-9953.
27. Pleasant Grove Church, Woodland, will honor pastor Jeff Gilder on his retirement with a reception Feb. 19 at 3 p.m.
28. First Church, Jackson, is sponsoring GriefShare, a weekly seminar/support group for people grieving the death of someone close. Groups meet every Sunday through May 29 in the Christian Life Center conference room from 5 - 7 p.m. Call (601) 949-1907 for more information.